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My comments about the Microsoft Antitrust Case:

I believe the Microsoft monopoly has had a detrimental effect on the internet, effectively transforming the internet from an open, standards-based communication system to one that is a proprietary, Microsoft-based system under their control. In essence, Microsoft now partially controls communications on the internet and world wide web and their influence is growing. If this is not corrected, then there is a good possibility that Microsoft could largely or completely control communications and interactions on the internet and world wide web.

Presently, Intel or AMD based computers comprise about 90% or more of the personal computer market in the US. Microsoft has a monopoly in this market, and the vast majority of Intel/AMD computers run the Microsoft operating system and the Internet Explorer web browser. Thus, most web designers make websites for Microsoft based systems and browsers. However, Microsoft-generated web documents and Microsoft-based browsers rely on proprietary features (eg, non-ISO characters, proprietary javascript implementations, etc) which do not conform to web standards and can't be emulated using web-standard browsers, such as those available for Linux and FreeBSD . Browsers for these systems are based on reading web documents which are designed to open standards, and will render pages designed for the proprietary standards of Internet Explorer poorly if at all. The net effect is that if you own an Intel/AMD computer, you cannot fully access the worldwide web and internet unless you run the Microsoft operating system on your computer.

This has a real manifestation in my life. There are many commercial sites where I have tried to make on-line purchases and couldn't because my web-standard browsers (I use three different browsers under Linux) could not read the web page because it was designed for Internet Explorer. There are also many government and official sites I have tried to visit that did not render properly and thus prevented me from obtaining useful information. The problem is getting worse, and in the last six months I have noticed problems at many more sites than in the past.

I believe that it is essential that the U.S. Courts involved in this matter create an agreement which prevents Microsoft from having a monopoly on the internet and world wide web. As general suggestions, as a minimum Microsoft should make the complete source code of their web browser, Internet Explorer and subsequent editions, open to the public. The operating system source code that is relevant to computer networking should also be disclosed. Furthermore, Microsoft application programs should by default generate web documents which are designed to open web standards, such as those espoused by the Worldwide Web Consortium (www.w3c.org).

Regards,
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